

VZCZCXRO6402
PP RUEHDE RUEHDIR
DE RUEHDO #0860 3501332
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 151332Z DEC 08
FM AMEMBASSY DOHA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8525
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 0834
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH 0522

C O N F I D E N T I A L DOHA 000860

SIPDIS

G/TIP PLEASE PASS TO AMBASSADOR LAGON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/15/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [KTIP](#) [QA](#)

SUBJECT: QATAR PROPOSES SENDING TIP DELEGATION TO WASHINGTON

REF: A. DOHA 664

[1](#)B. DOHA 834

Classified By: Ambassador Joseph E. LeBaron for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

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This is an action request. See paragraph 3.

(C) KEY POINTS

-- At a December 4 meeting with Ambassador, MFA Minister of State for International Cooperation and Conferences Khalid Al-Attiah proposed sending a delegation to Washington in early 2009 to work with G/TIP to map out a comprehensive anti-TIP strategy for Qatar. He observed that it is "time to take the outreached hand" of the United States on this issue.

-- Al-Attiah stated that there are elements in the GOQ that view the annual TIP rankings as an infringement upon Qatari sovereignty. He said that he reminded those elements that the Tier 3 TIP ranking would ultimately hurt Qatar economically, as people grow more aware of abuses and as victims discover ways of initiating litigation in U.S. courts for TIP violations in Qatar.

(C) COMMENTS

-- Al-Attiah is clearly carrying the anti-TIP message to the highest levels of the Qatari ruling structure. He would not have proposed sending a delegation to Washington to develop an anti-TIP strategy unless he was confident that he could withstand the criticisms of his detractors and secure necessary support for his cooperative approach. His proposal is a hopeful sign that Al-Attiah's pro-active engagement on human rights in general, and anti-TIP in particular, is in the ascendancy.

-- We have identified TIP as one of the main issues complicating the U.S.-Qatar bilateral relationship, and believe our strategy of constructive dialogue with the GOQ on this issue (see Ref A) is bearing fruit. Al-Attiah's proposal may be a sign that the GOQ realizes that our desire to cooperate on TIP is genuine, and that more is to be gained by accepting our "outreached hand."

End Key Points and Comments.

[1](#)1. (C) MFA Minister of State for International Cooperation and Conferences Khalid Al-Attiah told Ambassador December 4 in follow up to TIP Director Lagon's visit (Ref B) that it is "time to take the outreached hand" of the United States on TIP issues and proposed sending a delegation to Washington in early 2009 to work with G/TIP to map out a comprehensive

anti-TIP strategy for Qatar. The proposed delegation would include representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Labor, and National Human Rights Committee.

12. (C) Al-Attiyah said that the Amir and the senior Qatari leadership had made clear their commitment to fighting TIP, but that there were elements within the GOQ that still resisted. He said that many viewed the annual TIP rankings as an infringement upon Qatari sovereignty and dismissed Qatar's Tier 3 ranking as irrelevant. Al-Attiyah said that he reminded those elements that TIP poses a real economic threat to Qatar as awareness of abuses against laborers in the country increases. He also predicted that TIP victims would eventually try to sue Qatari companies in U.S. courts for the exploitation they may have suffered in Qatar, and that the prospect of legal action is a serious economic threat.

13. (C) Post requests G/TIP's assistance in arranging a program for the Qatari delegation.
LeBaron